

Articles and Sermons :: It is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

It is Christ in you, the hope of glory:, on: 2016/4/14 16:17

It is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

The Christian life either never seems easy, or does not reach the heights expected by those that profess the faith. Those who weigh up their lives against the example of scripture suspect there is something missing from their lives. Christians all realize that Christ is the answer, but do not seem to know how to take full hold of the offering of the NT. Many churches struggle or fall away and many pastors do not know why. But there is an answer to these dilemmas. It has always been there. It is found in the books of the NT and in particular in the writings and experience of Paul.

In the OT Daniel (2:28) tells us that there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries. It is fortunate that God does reveal mysteries because in the NT there are several mysteries. How many mysteries are there in the NT? There are 8 separate mysteries mentioned, the word mystery itself being used 22 times NKJV. Of these 8 mysteries, 7 are mentioned without understanding or explanation being given, but one of these 8 is mentioned no less than 15 times and is described in many different ways. When something is just anything is mentioned in the Bible, it is important. When something is the same thought is mentioned 6 times, we should consider that it came from heaven for us. Such a verse is that verse which says that if we save our own life we lose it and if we lose our life to Christ, we save it. That particular thought is one of the most profound in scripture. (Matt 10:39; 16:25, Luke 9:24; 17:33, Mark 8:35, John 12:25)

- 1 Mystery of the blindness of the Jews - Rom 11:25
- 2 Mystery of Christ and the church - Ephesians 5:32
- 3 Mystery of the rapture - 1 Corinthians 15:51
- 4 Mystery of Lawlessness(or iniquity) - 2 Thess 2:7
- 5 Mystery of the seven stars - Revelation 1:20
- 6 Mystery of Babylon - Revelation 17:5
- 7 Mystery of the woman, mother of harlots - Rev 17:7

As an example of this mystery, in his first letter to Corinth Paul challenged them with these words. 1 Corinthians 3:16 (NKJV) Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? 1 Corinthians 6:19 (NKJV) do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?

In his second letter to Corinth Paul again challenged them with these words from 2 Corinthians 13:5 (NKJV) Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? unless indeed you are disqualified. Notice the change from Holy Spirit within you to Jesus Christ is in you.

It was because he was trying to get them to see what this mystery was. Not only that, but that they were in fact a part of this mystery. The mystery was something inside of them something they had never realized. They did not realize this one incredible fact. They knew they were saved, but did not fully know what this meant and Paul was trying to teach them.

Before we look at the mystery itself, let us look at the background of it in the OT. I said earlier that this mystery was not known to any of the OT prophets. Let me just divert onto this mystery for a moment. (yes - The prophets knew that the Messiah was to come, but what they did not know was the form in which the Messiah would relate to His people they probably imagined a King a person outside of them) OT people were used to having a King to rule them. To have a deity live inside of them was totally new and not known until revealed to Paul between AD 38-45. Paul did not write about it till AD 55-58. So that is why Paul taught NT people WHO they were in Christ, rather than what we should do. Why he told them WHAT to do it was because they had not yet learned to find out themselves from the Spirit of God within them.

- The mystery kept secret - Romans 16:25
- The mystery which has been hidden - Colossians 1:26
- The wisdom of God in a mystery - Corinthians 2:7
- The fellowship of the mystery - Ephesians 3:9
- The mystery of the gospel - Ephesians 6:19

The mystery made known to Paul - Ephesians 3:3

The mystery of Christ Ephesians - 3:4

The mystery among the gentiles - Colossians 1:27

The mystery of God - Colossians 2:2

The mystery of Christ - Colossians 4:3

The mystery of His will - Ephesians 1:9

The mystery of the faith - 1 Timothy 3:9

The mystery of godliness - 1 Timothy 3:16

The mystery of God - Mark 4:11

The mystery of God - Revelation 10:7 (this last one may be as general as referring to Jesus return, the establishment of peace and righteousness on earth - but involving THE mystery as above.

There are two verses in the NT, which when taken together sum up the whole mystery. Galatians 2:20 (NKJV) - I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. Colossians 3:4 (NKJV) - When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

This new state is Christ in you - and Christ my life from Colossians and as explained in Gal. 2:20

1- We have been crucified with Christ. This means that when you were born again, you received the benefit of having died with Christ at His crucifixion. In some incredible way God considers us to have been present in the body of Christ at His crucifixion and resurrection.

2 - It is no longer you who live. This is profound. This means that your old Adamic life is dead and that your old sinful life is gone. In Colossians Paul says you died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. In Romans 6:6 and 6:11 he says we are dead to sin.

3 - Christ now lives in you. This means that you now have the benefit of the life of Christ in you, because when he was resurrected he provided a new life for us. So we can say that.Â

(NKJV) Colossians 1:25-27 I became a minister according to the stewardship from God which was given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God, the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints. To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. (NIV) (Colossians 1:25-27) I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullnessâ€”the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the saints. 27To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. (NASB) Colossians 1.25-26 â€œI was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, that is, the mystery which has been hidden from past ages and generations, but has now been revealed to His saints, to whom God willed to be made known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Is what I have said common knowledge or something more? I believe it is something more. Few believers seem to know its importance and certainly not how to apply it to their lives. We all know about receiving the Holy Spirit when we repent and believe. We know that the Holy Spirit takes up residence in us when we are born again. We all know that - it is common knowledge. But Paul is here referring to the depth and breadth of the full work of salvation by the Holy Spirit in us. I am not saying it is an extra to salvation â€” that would be heresy. But Christ in you is the mystery of life. It means that Christ actually lives His life in us, not just a presence but a living life - constantly revealing His Fullness. This new life is lived by faith. This means that everything in our lives that we receive from God is received by us - from the faith that He has given and developed in us. We get nothing by any other means than by faith. Faith is the connection between God and us. Our attempts through self-effort not only achieve nothing, but also negate faith. Faith cannot operate if we are using self-effort! However, attempting to fulfill God's righteousness apart from divine enablement is self effort, sin and unbelief

This mystery is the most important teaching in the NT â€” God told Paul it was his main task to preach it.

Although it is clearly important, it is not often taught by the church. Its importance does not seem to be generally acknowledged. It does not seem to be common knowledge.

It can be intellectually understood by teaching, but only fully known by the revelation of the Spirit of God.

This life is only initiated and learned under the hand of God and always involves God's sovereignty over adversity, trial, persecution or injustice in the lives of willing believers surrendered to God.

Knowledge of and usage of this mystery of Christ in you is a fundamental necessity and was and is, the prime means of living the Christian life as God intended.

Where this life is not lived as intended, self works and legalism will operate in the resulting vacuum, under the guise of true spirituality.

Intellectual teaching alone will not enable the practice of this life in the believer. God alone can bring about this life within the believer by believers being surrendered (yielded "submitted") to the Lord in every aspect of their lives.

Finally, what did more contemporary saints believe?

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Hannah Whithall Smith -Â (1832-1911) Lay speaker and Author in the Holiness Movement in USA

"All the dealings of God with the soul of the believer are in order to bring him into oneness with Himself, that the prayer of our Lord may be fulfilled: "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." . . . "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me."

This soul-union was the glorious purpose in the heart of God for His people before the foundation of the world. It was the mystery hid from ages and generations. It was accomplished in the incarnation of Christ. It has been made known by the Scriptures. And it is realized as an actual experience by many of God's dear children.

But not by all. It is true of all, and God has not hidden it or made it hard, but the eyes of many are too dim and their hearts too unbelieving, and they fail to grasp it. And it is for the very purpose of bringing them into the personal and actual realization of this, that the Lord is stirring up believers everywhere at the present time to abandon themselves to Him, that He may work in them all the good pleasure of His will.

All the previous steps in the Christian life lead up to this. The Lord has made us for it; and until we have intelligently apprehended it, and have voluntarily consented to embrace it, the travail of His soul for us is not satisfied, nor have our hearts found their destined and final rest. (pp 224-225) This soul union of which I speak, this unspeakable glorious mystery of an indwelling God"â€"is not a new thing to ask for, but only to realize that which you already have." (pp 226-227)

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Norman Grubb - (1895-1993) Missionary to Africa, Founder of W.E. C. Writer and teacher. Grubb includes this writing from a friend of his (Christopher Bernard) in the last chapter in his final book Yes I Am.

"So many only know the saving grace of Christ by His blood for the forgiveness of sins, and so very few know the replaced life through His resurrected and ascended body, of victory, joy, peace, overcoming, triumph and complete rest. It is now my everyday continual experience that in fact I am a new creature, where old things are passed away and all things are become new. God intended only for His life to be manifested in us." (pp 245)

"But I now understand Who he is within me. I am full. I am satisfied. My thirst is quenched, my hunger is gone." (pp250)

"Prayer has become a state of being. It is no longer an act of formality. It is continual communion and fellowship with the Father"â€"â€". My spiritual life is dependent upon His total commitment to me"â€"â€". I have concluded in my life that it is absolutely impossible to live the Christian life, and that God never intended us to do so. He intended the Christ within us to live it." (pp 251)

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Claire Cloninger - Christian author and singer - A contemporary of Norman Grubb

This is the mystery we were made to contain: the very life of Jesus. He means to live out the reality of who he is right here within the reality of who we are. He means to be our lives-the breath of our lungs, the thoughts in our heads, the energy and creativity in our jobs, the love in our hearts. He means to take on the stress and unravel the inner complications so

that we can move through our lives just as he did, in gentleness and simplicity and harmony.

We were never intended to be more than containers: temples to contain His glory (1 Corinthians 3:16-17), branches to contain the sap of his life (John 15:1-8), vessels to contain the new wine of His Spirit (Romans 9:20-21). We are the glove, He is the hand. We are the cup, He is the coffee. We are the lamp, He is the light. This is what we were made for. This is the intended purpose of the human person and personality; not to be gods, but to be filled with God.

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So what does all this mean and what is the purpose of this teaching?

What does it all mean? It means that God's plan for mankind was to provide Jesus Christ as the Lamb to pay the price for the sin of the world via the crucifixion and resurrection. Based firmly on those events, and only on those events, came the fulfillment of God's plan to provide mankind (through the Holy Spirit) with the actual life of Jesus Christ to live within every believer. This in turn meant that each believer would be a co-redeemer with Jesus Christ, working under the direction of the Spirit to do God's work in the world. This is a concept and an amazing fact with which the mind cannot really comprehend and can only be experienced by faith. Whatever else we might believe about what the Bible says, this one concept of us living with the life of Christ within, appears to me to be the central outcome or expression of the whole Bible, the experience from which we are to minister to the world. Believers need to know and experience this by revelation; beyond mere intellectual knowledge; and by faith and through walking in the Spirit, to be disciples that can live in fullness of life in Christ. John affirms how God knows we will be - as Christ in the world in 1 John 4:17, "Love has been perfected among us, because as He is, so are we in this world."

What is the purpose of this teaching? Look at the state of this world and its peoples! Do you not see the reason right there? The increasing expression of evil in all its forms is unmistakable. God needs disciples to be as described here! The purpose of this teaching is to assist in equipping believers to be His instruments by which His plan for the world will come to fruition. We are meant to be God's hands and feet in this world; indeed His presence, that by the power of the life of Christ within us, we might minister life to a needy world. Paul says to teach every man, to present them complete in Christ, right after he announced that we all have "Christ in you (us)" in Colossians 1:17. Apt timing to indicate God's purpose! Once we know this fact by revelation and experience, we are to teach and encourage others towards it.

Some warnings! It can never be done by believers who try to do this task in their own strength, nor by those who work from any legalism, even if right sounding and derived from scriptural source, or out of ignorance. Being regenerate alone does not fully equip believers to minister in God's power. The regenerate need to be aware of the full provisions of God through Jesus Christ (as Paul said in Phillipians 3:10) "that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death." The requirement then is to lay down their lives in order that Christ may fill and fit them for this task. That is the purpose of this teaching, to assist that process. How can we possibly do God's work by the means He gave us, if we either do not know or do not utilize this scriptural fact that the life of Christ is operating within us? It is my humble opinion that God's commission to us cannot be fulfilled unless we are able to live as these teachings from scripture prescribe. Not to live this way is almost inexcusable because Christ died for those who could be saved through Him living in us.

Re: It is Christ in you, the hope of glory: - posted by wayneman (), on: 2016/4/14 20:51

This is an excellent word study on "mystery." It just occurred to me how seldom we hear of "the mystery of salvation" in modern preaching. We hear an occasional message on Mystery Babylon or the mystery of lawlessness; but the "mystery of salvation" goes against the evangelical rationalism of our day. If we are ever going to get past the "sounding brass and clanging symbol" stage, we have to get back to the mystery, which is...Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Re: , on: 2016/4/14 21:12

Yes, excellent study. Still chewing on it.

The Holy Spirit uses so many parallels to teach us and communicate spiritual truths to us.

By knowing what the mystery of godliness is, (Christ in you) we are able to deduce what the mystery of iniquity is.

And the Word even explains that to us.

Ephesians 2:2

Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

This is key to understanding how to "test the spirits."

Re: It is Christ in you, the hope of glory:, on: 2016/4/15 16:06

The true Christian life can never be done by believers who try to do this task in their own strength, nor by those who work from any legalism, even if right sounding and derived from scriptural source, or out of ignorance. Being regenerate alone does not fully equip believers to minister in God's power.

Jesus Christ living and abiding within us is the ONLY true foundation that exists.

Re: , on: 2016/4/17 1:05

Wayneman, tuc,

I think you will love this read. The entire eBook is an important addition to your collection of truth.
<http://www.christinyou.net/pages/pdfs/TriuneGodEbook.pdf>

The "union life" movement did have some emphasis on the advocacy of the koinonia union and participation with and in the Triune God that we have attempted to illustrate in this study, but portions of that movement failed to recognize that the Christian's spiritual union with God is a relational union, and not an essential union. The Christian does not become God, neither Father, Son, or Holy Spirit. The distinction between Christ and the Christian must always be maintained. The living Christ does not replace our humanity, destroy our individuality or personality, or cause a transmuting of the human into God. The assertion of "Christ as us," popular in the "Union Life Movement, can (and did) slide into a form of monistic pantheism (despite their redefinition of pantheism).

The "union life" movement was thus marginalized, and by their abuses and overstatements served only to make the mainline Western Protestant churches even more suspicious and cautious of any who might emphasize the inner subjective life of spiritual union with the Triune God. From the early decades of the 16th century Protestant Reformation there has been a predisposition against allowing Christian thought to move into the subjective category of koinonia. An early Lutheran reformer, Andreas Osiander (1498-1552), rejected the idea that justification was only an objective, legal and forensic declaration and imputation of Christ's alien righteousness, as was the teaching of Luther under the influence of Melancthon. Osiander argued that divine righteousness comes from God in Christ dwelling in the Christian by faith, that Christians can actually participate (koinonia) in Christ and His righteousness.

Both John Calvin and the Lutheran Formula of Concord (1557) rejected the idea that the indwelling of Christ had any connection to Christian justification and righteousness, and Protestants, in general, have ever since been suspicious of the teaching of the indwelling of the Triune God. They always seek to keep Christian thought objectified in theologia and oikonomia, and the juridical implications of such. Contemporary American Evangelicalism continues to avoid the intra-personal relationality of the Triune God with human beings in koinonia, the very purpose for which we were created. They offer instead the reheated smorgasbord of their respective ecclesiastical agendas, encouraging God's people to get more involved in churchy busyness, to be more committed and dedicated and consecrated to "the cause" de jour. They admonish the people in the pew to engage in human self-effort to read their bibles more often, pray more often, tithe ten percent, attend church services regularly, serve on committees, (and almost as a footnote) to serve the social needs of others. They contend that these "works" activities will draw people closer to fellowship with God and with one another in a productive religious community. How tragic that modern evangelicalism is so ignorant of the genuine grace-invigorated new covenant community and the koinonia of the living ecclesia.

So now, if you were wondering why what you are reading in this book is not what you hear in your local churches, I have attempted to provide you with some perspective of the aversion that most leaders in the institutional church today have toward the clear biblical pattern of the Triune God's intent to invest Himself (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) in genuine internal and indwelling relational participation with Christian persons, with you and me, and us together in Him! When Christian individuals attempt to share the "good news" of the indwelling life and love of Jesus, and spiritual union with the Triune God, they are often met with suspicion or outright repudiation by church leaders, for this message does not appear to advance the success of their programs. Everything in popular religion seems to look askance at such subjective

and experiential explanations of koinonia. Oh, yes, there are some voices crying in the wilderness, but the institutional Church, as a whole, is not interested. They have a bias against such subjective concerns of what goes on spiritually inside of the Christian believer. They adamantly retain their teaching on the historical oikonomia and doctrinal theologia.

Meanwhile God continues to speak to the hearts of individuals, wherever they might be, who yearn for intimacy with His Triune Being, and He reveals to them via personal revelation that is caught not taught what He desires to be and do in them. It is personal, and relational, and intimate fellowship with the three Persons of the Triune God, and therein with one another in the Church! Some might wonder whether the emphasis on the Triune God being made in this study diminishes or overshadow the Christocentric emphasis that some of us have emphasized. NEVER! Perhaps the diagram of the Christocentric Emphasis of God's Revelation (cf. Addendum P) will provide some perspective. Our Christian thinking must always retain a Christocentric perspective and focal point. The proper and legitimate starting point and approach to Christian thought is to orient all of our thinking to the historical Person and work of Jesus Christ, expressed in the category of oikonomia. Our theologia must be informed by, developed on the basis of, and derived from the Christological and soteriological narrative of oikonomia. Our knowledge of God is limited to the revelation of Jesus Christ alone, for Jesus told Philip, "If you had known Me, you should have known My Father also. He that has seen Me, has seen the Father" (Jn. 14:7,9). The Triune God is revealed by the Son of God. Jesus Christ is the Revelator, the *prima facie* (primary face) historic visibility of the invisible God. Likewise, the intimate relationality of experiential Christian koinonia with the Triune God and others must also be informed by, and derived from the historic Christological and soteriological narrative of oikonomia.

The center-point of the gospel record and Christian thought must always be Jesus Christ, the Son of God who revealed the Father and pointed to the full and complete sufficiency of Himself as the vital ontological means of allowing humanity to participate in intimate personal relationality with the Triune God. But there has been a repetitive tendency in Western Christian thought to focus on the historic Person and work of Jesus Christ (oikonomia), particularly noting Jesus' exclamation from the cross, "It is finished!" (John 19:30). No doubt the oikonomia is complete, and explains the historic focal point of the "Finished Work" of Jesus Christ. However, various interpretations of the "finished work" of Jesus have led to a perspective of the terminal finality of Jesus' work and Christian thought at the time of, and in the events of, Jesus' death and resurrection. This is a tragic shortcircuiting of the Triune God's intent to draw all human beings into personal participation of Himself in "abundant life" (Jn. 10:10) in every ensuing age. The oikonomia is not limited to the redemptive "fixing of the sin problem"; it is the ever-expanding center point of God's intent to draw all mankind into participation in the loving relational reality of His Triune life in koinonia.